

Our Young Folks.

BE HONEST AND TRUE.

Be honest and true,
O eyes that are blue !
In all that you say
And all that you do,
If evil you'd shun,
And good you'd pursue,
If friends you'd have many,
And foes you'd have few—
Be honest and true
In all that you say
And all that you do,
O eyes that are blue !

Be honest and true,
O eyes that are gray !
In all that you do
And all that you say
At home or abroad,
At work or at play,
As you laugh with your friend,
Or run by the way,
Be honest and true
By night and by day,
In all that you do
And all that you say,
O eyes that are gray !

Be honest and true,
O eyes that are brown !
On sincerity smile ;
On falsity frown ;
All goodness exalt,
All meanness put down
As you muse by the fire,
Or roam through the town,
Remember that honour
Is manhood's chief crown,
And wear it as yours,
O eyes that are brown !

Be honest and true,
O eyes of each hue !
Brown, black, gray and blue,
In all that you say
And all that you do,
O eyes in which mothers
Look down with delight,
That sparkle with joy
At things good and bright,
Do never a thing,
You would hide from their sight !
Stand up for the right
Like a chivalrous knight ;
For the conqueror still,
When the battle is through,
Is he who has ever
Been loyal and true.
Make the victory sure,
O eyes of each hue !

THE MOOSE'S MISTAKE.

The antlered head was thrown back proudly, the nostrils were dilated, and Alse sniffed the crisp air with delight. The snow lay white on wood and glade, and he looked about on a wide stretch of country, unbroken by any track but his own. The sun sinking low in the west threw a rosy glow over the scene, and the keen eyes scanning it all, discovered away in the south a steel-blue line that marked a stream of water.

"Which I will taste," said Alse. "Those others have no genius for discovering."

The "others" were his companions from whom he had strayed, or rather who had halted in their course as the day drew towards its close, while he pressed forward alone.

"Stay with us, Alse," urged a wise old moose, "so shall you keep out of danger."

"Danger !" Alse's head tossed in derision as he repeated the word, glorying in his own superb strength. "What danger can there be for one like me, to whom the other animals are mere pigmies ?"

It was a glorious freedom to be alone, to press forward and feel monarch of all the solitude. The clear air made distance illusive, and the stream he sought was farther away than it had first appeared ; but that fact did not change his determination to reach it. The sun had dropped out of sight and the pink glory of the sky was fast fading into a dull grey. From the dark line of the woods came the distant howl of a wolf.

"One of the dangers against which I was warned, I suppose," commented Alse, "as if I could not easily master any of those creatures ! Let it howl ; it dare not come near me."

Another voice took up the doleful "woo-oo !" but Alse, disdaining trifles, did not notice that the single cry had changed to a chorus. Dark forms stole out of the woods and began to follow him, cautiously at first, but growing bolder as their numbers increased. Their cries grew sharper and so near that Alse finally looked back to see a dozen or more dark bodies skulking along in the edge of the wood.

"Cowardly creatures !" sneered Alse, yet with the next breath he added : "but there are so many of them !" And he quickened his pace. His increased speed seemed at once to increase the valour of his pursuers. They left the shadows and chased eagerly after him, and where he had counted a dozen he might now have seen a score. Their hungry voices rent the air, and sounded ominous and fearful. They were drawing nearer, too, though Alse, no longer careless, was exerting his utmost power in the race.

"I could easily vanquish any one of them, he panted, but all"—

Alas ! it was all of them he had to fight when he was brought to bay at last. Nearer and yet nearer they drew, until the sharp snapping of their jaws could be distinctly heard amid their cries. Alse felt that his strength was spent. The stream was still far away, and his enemies were closing in around him. He lifted his head despairingly to the darkening sky, and realized, too late, the folly of treating with contempt, danger he might well have avoided. His foes were insignificant singly, but together they were a force against which his boasted strength was weakness. They sprang upon him on every side, and the unequal contest was soon over. Poor Alse ! he was only one of many who learn too late the power of small evils neglected to grow into a great one, and that a life may be wasted by despising so-called trifles.

A LOST CHANCE.

I know a dear boy who is sweet and good and generous most of the time, but sometimes he gets into a bad way, like most people. Every thing gets wrong at such times, but most wrong of all is the dear little heart.

One day, not long ago, a dirty-faced, ragged, ugly little fellow came up the back walk and asked, "Can I haul out the ashes ?"

Henry—that is not his real name, but I shall not tell that—Henry was standing in the back-yard, in a bad humour.

"No !" he snapped out as cross as could be. "Don't want 'em taken out."

The dirty faced little ash-boy stood still a moment, almost afraid to say another word to such an ill-natured child ; but finally he ventured timidly : "Say would you please give me a drink ?"

"No, I won't," said the cross Henry, with an angry frown.

The little ash-boy climbed over the fence, thinking no doubt, "What a funny boy, not to give a fellow even a drink of water ?"

And Henry's conscience within began to speak sadly to him : "Such a little thing, Henry, so easy to do. Such a poor little ragged fellow gets little enough in this world. What a chance to do a bit of good !"

And then there arose in his mind the words of his teacher, the Sunday before, as she talked of the beauty of doing little acts of kindness for those we meet every day, and how she had held up a glass of water, and repeated :—

"Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

"And I didn't do it," said Henry.

Then he went into the house and told his other conscience, which was his mother. She looked down at him with such sad, disappointed eyes, and just said :—

"Why, Henry !"

Then Henry felt so miserable he could not do anything. So he went out on the front steps and watched ash-carts all the rest of the afternoon. But there was no dirty-faced little boy thirsting for a cup of cold water who passed that way.

His mother came to the door presently, and said ;—

"He's got a drink by this time," for she knew what Henry was watching for.

"Some one else gave it to him, then," said Henry.

"And received what you lost, the blessing of a kind act," said his mother.

THE CANADIAN MUTUAL LIFE ASSOCIATION.

MONTREAL, QUE.,
385 St. Antoine St., February 10, 1892.

W. P. PAGE,—Allow me to express my satisfaction at the report of the financial standing of the Society, which is shown by the allowance made to each from the Disbursement Fund for 1880 and 1881 Policy-holders. It shows well for the Association and silences the dread prophecies which have been uttered against it. Enclosed find premium (last assessment).

Yours very sincerely,

(REV.) W. J. SMYTHE,
Pastor of Calvin Presbyterian Church.

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Sydney, C.B.

C. I. LAGUE.

DR. T. A. SLOCUM'S

OXYGENIZED EMULSION of PURE COD LIVER OIL. If you have Asthma—Use it. For sale by all druggists. 35 cents per bottle.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

March 6,
1892.

THE DOWNFALL OF JUDAH.

Jer 39:
1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Behold your house is left unto you desolate.—Matt. xxiii. 38.

INTRODUCTORY.

The great calamity, long and clearly foretold by the prophets under divine inspiration, at length fell upon the Jewish people. They could not plead the excuse that they were ignorant of what was about to take place. The warnings were clear and explicit. It was not through ignorance but through unbelief that they erred. They went on in their evil ways, not believing that the things foretold by the prophets would take place. The people had been chastised and afflicted in various ways, and had been told that the way to escape more terrible evils was to repent, to give up their idolatry, their unrighteous conduct, and dependence on alliances with other nations, and to turn to the Lord, to serve Him and to trust in Him. Had they given heed to the divine message through the prophets then the evils threatened would have been averted and they would have been spared the sufferings and the humiliation that befell them and their nation. But they believed not and continued in their disobedience, and the threatenings were fulfilled in all their terrible severity.

I. **The Siege and Capture of Jerusalem**—Zedekiah, the son of the good king Josiah, was the twenty-first and last of the kings of Judah. He did not follow in his father's footsteps, and with him the kingdom came to an end. In the ninth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar, the prosperous and successful king of Babylon, came with his army and laid siege to the city of Jerusalem. The besieging army was very numerous and was well equipped. It was composed of veterans who had been victorious in many a hard fought contest, and they had many and powerful instruments of warfare, though very unlike those employed by modern nations. They had no cannon, but instead they had strong and powerful battering rams with which they could make breaches in the defensive walls. Towers were also erected on whose tops the Chaldean archers could shoot at the defenders. Nor were the courage and bravery of the defenders less marked than that displayed by the besiegers. The city itself was favourably situated for defence, and it had been artificially strengthened. The defenders manned the walls and fought desperately to defeat the invaders. If the walls were weakened in places the Jews did not hesitate to pull down houses and use the stones for making repairs ; they were ready to dispute every inch of ground. Though the Jews were greatly outnumbered, they were able to hold out for a long time. The Chaldeans were able to cut off all food supplies from the devoted inhabitants of the city, and the horrors of famine were experienced ; disease and pestilence followed, and all were reduced to the last extremity. The desperate and heroic character of the resistance offered is seen from the fact that the siege lasted for about a year and a-half. At last a breach was made in the walls and the invaders were able to enter the city, the defenders now being powerless to offer the slightest resistance. It was at midnight on a summer night. Nebuchadnezzar was not present with his army at the capture of Jerusalem, but the chief officers made their entry into the city. The names of six are given : the two words, Sar-se-chim and Rab-mag, are understood to be designations of official position, not the names of individuals, the first meaning "the chief of the eunuchs," and the second "the high priest" or "the chief of the sorcerers." These and the officers accompanying them "set in the middle gate," within the city, and decided what was to be done with the unfortunate inhabitants that had survived the terrible conflict.

II. **Zedekiah's Punishment.**—King Zedekiah perceived that it was dangerous to remain any longer in the city. With the remains of his shattered forces, when he saw the Chaldeans pouring into the city on the north side, he hastened down to the south-east corner, passing through the royal gardens and out on to the plain that extended eastward to the Jordan. The fugitives hastened along the road to Jericho. The Chaldeans were on the alert and a sufficient force was soon in pursuit of the retreating king and discomfited soldiers. The pursuers soon gained upon them, came up with and captured them. Nebuchadnezzar was at the same time conducting the siege of Tyre, and made Riblah, a city about seventy-five miles north of Damascus, his headquarters. Thither the captors of the king and his fleeing force conducted them, and they were brought before Nebuchadnezzar, who himself was to decide their fate, and a cruel one it was. The king of Babylon was very angry with Zedekiah because he had been false to his oath of allegiance and acting towards him in a treacherous manner, but the barbarity of the punishment inflicted shows how cruel and merciless a man the king of Babylon could be. His vengeance was first wreaked upon the sons of Zedekiah, who were cruelly slain before his eyes. Then the nobles who had accompanied him in his attempt to escape were put to death. Having looked his last on these awful scenes, then his own eyes were put out ; and vivid would be the painful recollections of that terrible hour so long as the dethroned and captive king lived. Zedekiah was then sent down to Babylon as a prisoner, where it is supposed he remained till the day of his death. His captivity also seems to have been marked by needless cruelty. A blind man sufficiently guarded could entertain but little hope of being able to make his escape, yet this poor, unfortunate monarch was loaded with chains, thus adding to his misery and humiliation. He had been the occupant of the highest position in the land, now he was reduced to the most degrading condition, and the worst part of it was the reflection that if he had hearkened to the Word of the Lord and obeyed Him he would have escaped these almost unbearable miseries.

III. **The Overthrow of Jerusalem.**—The city was not immediately destroyed on the entrance of the Chaldean army. Twice before the armies of Nebuchadnezzar had gained victories over the Jews, but he had spared the city. Possibly his officers waited until he should determine on the course now to be pursued. The word had gone forth that now the city was to be destroyed. Jeremiah had prophesied that the palace was to be destroyed, and without knowing it these rough Chaldean soldiers were fulfilling the prophet's words. They set fire to the stately buildings, and the temple was also destroyed. Nor did the best houses in the city escape ; they, too, were reduced to ashes. The walls that had served so well in protecting the inhabitants were levelled with the ground, and that proud and beautiful city was left a heap of ruins. God has said that the nation that will not serve Him shall perish. There was a fearful slaughter in the courts of the Temple and the streets of the city when the final ruin overtook it. The people that survived these horrors were carried away as exiles to Babylon, and the poor were allowed to remain. To them were allotted fields and vineyards, which they were to cultivate. They had been cruelly oppressed, but now their oppressors were gone, and though a terrible calamity had befallen the country they enjoyed better times than before.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

God's word stands sure. It endures forever. The threatenings addressed to the rebellious rulers and people were fulfilled at last.

In the numerous warnings given and the time that intervened, when opportunities of escape were provided, the forbearance and mercy of God are seen.

Nebuchadnezzar's cruelty to Zedekiah, his sons and nobles, were sins for which he would have to answer.